

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

NEW ENGLAND POWER COMPANY

LICENSE NO. CRE 2023-023

September 19, 2023

**Application for License to Construct and Maintain Electric Lines
Over and Across Public Waters in Hinsdale**

This license is granted to New England Power Company (“NEP”) to construct and maintain a portion of its B2 Line, an existing 69kV electric transmission line, though redesigned to 115kV standards, consistent with long-term planning needs, to the extent that it extends over and across public waters in Hinsdale, all as described in its application and depicted in its filings, and as specified in the Enforcement Division’s recommendation. The B2 Line was previously licensed in 1953 by the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission through Order #6217, wherein the B2 line is identified as V-W 1908.

I. BACKGROUND

On September 7, 2023 NEP filed an application with the N.H. Department of Energy (Department), pursuant to RSA 371:17, requesting a license to construct and maintain its B2 Line, an existing 69kV electric transmission line, that consistent with long-term planning needs will be replaced with a 115kV line that initially will continue to be operated at 69kV, to the extent that it extends over and across public waters in Hinsdale, all as described in its application and depicted in its filings. On September 18, 2023, the Department’s Enforcement Division Staff filed a recommendation that the application be approved, and a license granted, based on the application filings, applicable statutes, rules, NESC requirements, and land ownership, as well as public need, safety, and impact. The application and subsequent docket

filings are posted to the Department's website (energy.nh.gov) at [Utility Crossings Over State Lands and Public Waters | NH Department of Energy](#).

II. SUMMARY OF LICENSE

A. Crossing Locations and Construction

This license pertains to NEP's B2 Line, which is an existing 69kV electric transmission line that will be replaced with a 115kV line that initially will continue to be operated at 69kV and that extends over and across public waters of the Connecticut River in Hinsdale. The NEP B2 line was originally built in the early 1930's.

The proposed project for the B2 Line encompasses rerouting the line to fulfill asset-separation requirements at the Vernon Substation, as well as conductor replacement.

NEP is preparing to relocate its existing assets from the Vernon Substation to a proposed substation at a nearby site in Vernon, Vermont, which will be called the Huntington Substation #3206 (the "Huntington Substation"). This project will reroute and connect the B2 Line from the Vernon Substation to the Huntington Substation. As part of the project, NEP will replace the existing conductor with new 795 kcmil high-tension conductor to span the Connecticut River. The project also involves replacing the existing copper-weld shield wire on the line with 5/8" optical ground wire and 1/2" extra high strength shield wire.

The rerouted B2 Line will span the Connecticut River between proposed Structure 4B in Hinsdale, NH and proposed Structure 3B in Vernon, VT. Structure 4B will be located approximately one mile southwest of the intersection of Stage Road and Prospect Street in Hinsdale, the nearest public ways.

The proposed structure locations create a span of 1,638 feet between Structure 4B and Structure 3B with 1,400 ft. crossing public water.

B. Regulatory Requirements

NEP is responsible for obtaining any and all other federal, state, or local permits required by authorities having jurisdiction for the construction and installation of the proposed crossing. According to the application, a New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Shoreland Permit by Notification (PBN) will be obtained for the work planned under this application in relation to temporary impacts to the 250-foot protected shoreland of the Connecticut River associated with the project prior to the commencement of construction.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) regulates the subject portion of the Connecticut River as navigable waters and the scope of work discussed in this application at the subject public water crossing will be licensed via Self-Verification under the ACOE New Hampshire Programmatic General Permit #2, and this licensing will be accomplished prior to commencement of the maintenance project.

C. Property Rights

According to NEP, the proposed work will be accomplished within existing right-of-way easements, thereby mitigating impacts and concerns of property owners affected by the scope of the project.

D. Service to the Public and the Effect on Public Rights

According to the application, the existing crossings were constructed, operated, and maintained to meet the reasonable requirements of service to the public. NEP affirmed that the proposed modifications will continue to meet that public need and will not substantially affect the public's use and enjoyment of the public waters of the Connecticut River in Hinsdale.

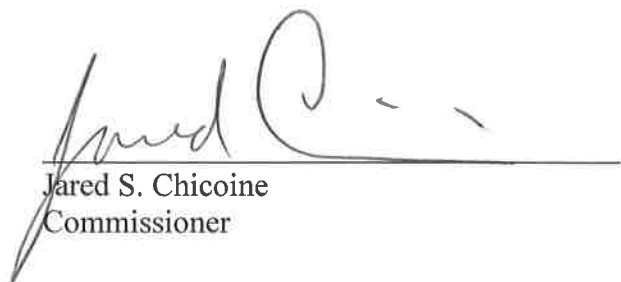
The line modifications are designed and will be constructed and maintained in accordance with the 2012 National Electrical Safety Code (NESC), which is 36.1 feet for

115kV wires over water areas suitable for all boating including lakes, ponds, reservoirs, tidal waters, rivers, streams, and canals with an unobstructed surface area of 200 to 2,000 acres. The actual minimum height over the Connecticut River exceeds the minimum NESC requirement. The project has been designed to meet 115kV clearance requirements in the event the line is operated at 115kV in the future. NEP referenced FEMA flood maps when establishing 100-year flood elevations for the water crossing spans. The minimum clearance requirements based on the design conditions at 392 deg F and the FEMA 10-year flood-level elevation have been met.

II. DEPARTMENT DECISION

NEP is authorized pursuant to RSA 371:17, *et seq.*, to construct, install, operate, and maintain electric lines over and across the public waters of the Connecticut River in Hinsdale, as described in its application and depicted in its filings, and as specified in the Enforcement Division’s recommendation. Based on the factual representations set forth in the application and the recommendation, the Department finds that the requested crossing amendments are necessary to meet the reasonable requirements of reliable service to the public, as required by RSA 371:17, and that the requested license may be exercised without substantially affecting public rights in the public waters at the crossing location in Hinsdale, as required for approval under RSA 371:20. Therefore, the application is approved.

By order of the Department of Energy of New Hampshire this 19th day of September 2023.



Jared S. Chicoine
Commissioner

Pursuant to RSA 371:20, applicants and other persons directly affected by the issuance or denial of a license may appeal to the Public Utilities Commission within 30 days of the department's decision.